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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study of effective classroom management in British primary schools, with particular emphasis on how teachers deal with deviant or disruptive behavior. The study was conducted through observation of 239 lessons and interviews with 60 teachers and through interviews with 430 pupils aged 5-12. The research found a lack of congruence between the pupils' perception of events and that of the teachers. Pupils are an important source of information, able to conceptualize their thoughts and willing to provide ideas on seemingly contentious subjects, such as deviance, in a structured, non-anarchic way. But teachers either do not recognize this or do not perceive pupils' views to be important. Although within some classrooms teacher-pupil interactions are used to discuss pupils behaviors, no opportunity is provided to discuss the teachers' behaviors. Pupils may also be concerned that they could not talk as honestly to their own class teacher as they did to a researcher for fear of retribution. Some of the findings of the study are: children are concerned with fairness; they do not like teachers who shout; and a particular strategy teachers frequently employ may not work because of the way it is perceived by their pupils. The paper concludes that while there are constraints to eliciting pupils' views on discipline, not the least of which may be the teacher's own attitude, pupils offer insights to classroom life that should not be ignored if teachers are to understand better the minor acts of deviancy that can occupy so much of their teaching time, as well as diminish some of the anxieties about control that teachers may feel. (Contains 22 references.) (ND)

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The Perspectives of Teachers, Pupils and Researcher.

A Paper presented at the Annual American Educational Research Conference, San Francisco, April 1995

by

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BACKGROUND TO THE PAPER

This paper investigates classroom management in British primary schools (ages 5-12) by observing and interviewing experienced teachers and pupils. There is special emphasis on the management of pupils' behaviour, though other elements are also explored.

Medley (1985) writing about research on teaching comments that 'good teaching' is a theme that runs through all research in this area. He discusses the difficulty in defining what 'good teaching' is and poses the question:

> *"Is the best teacher the one whose pupils learn the most (Type A)? The teacher whose pupils have the best learning experiences in school (Type B)? The teacher whose classroom behavior conforms most closely to some conception of 'best' practice (Type C)? The one who diagnoses pupil difficulties and prescribes remedies for them most accurately (Type D)? The teacher who has the largest repertoire of professional knowledge and skills (Type E)? Or the teacher who has a set of personal characteristics closest to those of the ideal teacher (Type F)?" (p.4316)*

Medley adopts the Type A definition, as do many other investigators, that pupil learning is of greatest importance, but as with most definitions of human behaviour, that of 'effectiveness' is subjective and most likely to be a combination of any of the descriptors A-F. This lack of certainty makes research into the study of teaching problematic, and the absence of a single approved pattern of teaching has led investigators to look at a variety of background factors to see which might be the most worthy of further scrutiny. The present research is one such attempt to understand why some primary classrooms and schools appear to be managed more effectively than others, according to a variety of effectiveness criteria, including the perceptions of teachers and pupils.

Despite the problems of obtaining agreement on criterion measures, some researchers have considered ratings of teachers by outside evaluators, others have taken pupil gains as measured by test scores, often of a short-term nature. There are investigators who have elicited the views of pupils, teachers, or head teachers on what constitutes effective teaching. More recent studies have begun to show a little more consistency than earlier ones. Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1993) analysed several hundred studies and expert appraisals of factors thought to influence pupil learning. They described how some investigators have concentrated

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on general matters, whereas others addressed particular types of pupil or school, like those thought to be 'at risk' in some way. Yet others have attempted to aggregate the findings of several researchers using techniques like meta-analysis (Glass, 1978) to discover, for example, whether particular factors like class size seemed to be influential on learning (Glass and Smith, 1979).

The perusal of a very wide range of relevant research by Wang, Haertel and Walberg produced a list of 228 variables which seemed to have some effect on pupil learning. They grouped these into six sets covering (1) the State and District factors, (2) Home and Community, (3) School Demographics, (4) Design and Delivery of the Curriculum, (5) Classroom Practices, and (6) Pupil Characteristics.

The first conclusion was that 'proximal' factors (what happens within the school) are considered to be far more influential than 'distal' factors, that is aspects such as State or District policies. Regional policies only made an impact on pupil learning if classroom processes changed. Secondly, the two elements 'classroom practices' and 'pupil characteristics' consistently featured amongst the most influential factors. Thirdly, and most importantly in terms of the present research, within the heading 'classroom practices' it was classroom management that was shown to bear most strongly on effective learning.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Without research into an aspect of schooling that attracts continual attention and sometimes criticism, and about which writing is often polemical rather than substantiated by evidence, a well observed and authoritative account of classroom management skills cannot be achieved. It would be difficult to argue that teachers' classroom management skills have no effect at all on their overall effectiveness, so this present study of such skills should have implications for future teachers and the institutions responsible for training them.

American Gallup polls continually suggest that discipline problems are of great concern to a large number of the population, and often within public discussion of issues in education, school discipline has emerged as causing the greatest concern (Duke and Jones 1984). The Elton Report (1989) in Britain was instigated as a result of what was said to be public concern about the problems of discipline in schools, the nature of the problem being:

"A school's central purpose is that children should learn. Good behaviour makes effective teaching and learning possible. Bad behaviour disrupts these processes". (p.54)

THE NATURE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

There are several significant recurring themes in the literature. The first focuses upon teachers and their organisational abilities. This carries with it the implication that if people can be responsible for their own actions, can anticipate and avoid problems, then training in the important aspects of organisation, such as advance preparation and planning, enables the art of competent classroom management to be attained (Wragg 1993a). Many writers, often from different perspectives, have expressed this view in their own way.

Brophy (1983) contends that organisation and the management of a classroom lie at the heart of teacher effectiveness. He recognises the importance of classroom observation, argues that research shows it is better to avoid problems before they arise, and feels this can be achieved through planning and helping pupils. Doyle (1980) believes that to be an effective manager a teacher needs to possess a large amount of knowledge on what can happen in a classroom, have an ability to process information quickly and be skilful in the art of actually carrying out the necessary action effectively over time.

A second theme within the class management literature incorporates not only the management of classroom resources, but also the management of pupil behaviour. It expands the definition to include the interaction of teachers and pupils when prevention of misbehaviour has not occurred, or has failed to be successful. This means that the teacher is not studied in isolation, as consideration has to be given to how a teacher interacts with the pupils. The issue of discipline is related to this theme, Tauber (1985) comments on the presence of power bases within the teacher-pupil relationship.

> *"Even the most knowledgeable content experts have seen their teaching efforts go to waste if discipline did not first exist within the school and classroom. Discipline is a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient, condition for learning to take place. Discipline establishes the framework within which teaching and learning can evolve. Effective educators are effective managers and have at their disposal a variety of power bases that they consciously and skilfully apply in order to establish and maintain discipline." (p.133)*

Several other issues also receive attention in the research literature, including teachers' management of their professional skills, such as questioning or explaining strategies, pupils' perceptions of effective management, the roles and responsibilities of, and relationships between classroom teachers and senior teachers in the school; the effects of intervention programmes, often based on behaviour modification, sanctuary units or behaviour contracts. Class management encompasses a wide variety of issues, from showing what the teacher regards as a good piece of work to the class, to dealing with a fight between pupils, and the effects of both on the class are important in their contribution to the overall effectiveness of a teacher's class management.

The interest and importance of classroom management is reflected in the numerous articles and books, particularly in American literature, that provide advice on how to become a 'better' class manager. There is considerably less literature based on research into the area. In America the size of the country, the differences in perceptions of and responses to the problems experienced in that society, and the greater volume of educational research, mean that concerns about discipline in schools are more frequently reflected in American than in the British research literature.

Hunt and Bedwell (1982) believe that there is a degree of disagreement about what makes an effective teacher, but there is agreement that in order to be effective the teacher needs to be able to control the class, because once control is lost it is difficult to regain it. Their definition of class management is based on discipline, however they state:

> *"The term class management is used....because the expression 'discipline' indicates an after-the-fact approach to classroom problems. Classroom management implies, at least in part, careful planning in order to avoid problems of control." (p.10)*

McManus (1989), summarising research into troublesome behaviour in the classroom, comments on the problem of definitions, especially when perceptions and ideologies differ, and what is seen as a cause by one party may be differently perceived by the other.

> *"No objective definition which would reduce the measurement of disruption to a simple counting process is possible. This definitional obscurity, unsatisfactory as it may be, is an important clue to one of the ways in which the problem of troublesome behaviour might be tackled. There are at least two parties in any disruptive incident. Both contribute to its being defined as serious or not, or indeed to whether it becomes defined as a disruptive incident at all. In the light of these definitional problems, it is not surprising that there are no reliable statistics on troublesome behaviour." (p.4)*

According to Weber (1964), in his classic text *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, power in any social relationship is reflected in the probability that one person will be able to carry out his will, even if there is resistance. Society has given teachers the 'duty of care', as it in known legally, and that is why the use of rewards and punishments may also be included in the scrutiny of classroom management, as teachers use an array of strategies to help them carry out these duties. Teachers, therefore, bear the institutional authority to exercise power over such matters as time, space and behaviour, but this authority may be disputed by their pupils.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The importance of classroom management is widely recognised, even if not all teachers successfully carry out their own management. There is also a degree of public concern by those who are not employed in education, but involved in it through their children, that discipline should not become a problem. The present study was designed to provide a number of different perspectives on classroom management in primary schools, in particular with respect to the way in which teachers deal with deviant or disruptive behaviour, even though studying this systematically is not a straightforward matter. It can be argued that disruptive behaviour in particular not only reduces the time that children can spend on the task, but also exerts a negative effect on classroom climate. Deutsch (1960) found that some teachers in inner city schools spent as much as 75% of their time trying to keep order, thereby reducing the time available for the learning that was supposed to be the central concern of the lesson.

These questions could have been addressed in many ways, but it was decided to carry out the research study principally through live observation of lessons and interviews with both teachers and pupils. Each aspect of the research methodology was intended to provide a different but complementary perspective within the area. Kyriacou and Newson (1982), in writing about research problems within the area of teacher effectiveness, concluded that future research should consider three options: 1. Using an observer within the classroom to write a description of the lesson, 2. Gaining the pupils' views of the lessons, 3. Seeking the teacher's view on how the lesson went. This three way perspective on classroom life has been sought in this study.

METHODOLOGY

In order to address these research questions, two linked studies were undertaken. They were intended to provide observation and interview data about relevant classroom events with a wide range of children and teachers. The first study used live observation and follow-up interviews to examine classroom events, to elicit both the forms of 'deviant' behaviour and teachers' responses to it, as well as their views of it. The second study involved semi-structured interviews with a large number of primary age pupils, so that their views could be educed.

Study one The live observation of 239 lessons in the classrooms of 60 teachers in primary schools in the North-west, the South-east and the South-west of England. This study involved the analysis of 1195 lesson segments, (five in each lesson); the observation of each individual pupil in every class to record 'on task' and 'deviant' behaviour; the collection and analysis of 279 'critical events', at least one from each lesson; interviews with each of the 60 teachers.

Study two Interviews with 430 pupils aged five to twelve to elicit their views of classroom management and 'deviancy'.

The classroom observations were undertaken by the researcher to collect detailed information on frequency and types of deviancy, 'on task' involvement levels and the behaviour and interactions of teachers and pupils, within the main focus of this classroom management study. To enable additional perspectives to that of the researcher to be achieved, teachers were also interviewed by the researcher about both class management in general and specific 'critical events' that had been observed taking place in their classrooms. Both teachers and pupils were shown the same photographs of disruptive events and interviewed about their perceptions of them.

One way of collecting the sort of observation data that lend themselves to analysis, is to select quite specific events and record them in some detail. In each observation period, therefore, the researcher recorded events that appeared to her to be illustrative of a teacher's class management style. The principal focus was upon those events which showed the pupils' behaviour and the teacher's management of that behaviour. These were recorded in a form termed 'critical events', based on a system of recording classroom processes developed by Flanagan (1949). Flanagan termed his illustrative events 'critical incidents'.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to provide both numeric and detailed descriptive accounts of classroom events. Although these two types of methodology are not commonly used in the same study, the use of both approaches to data collection can be applied in a way that is complementary rather then conflicting. Rather than adhering to a specific paradigm that may only provide a limited perspective on an area of study, it was intended that this use of a multilateral approach to data collection would serve to broaden the knowledge base and allow a number of different insights into classroom management to be obtained.

OBSERVATION DATA

Within each schedule every two minute period was recorded as a separate segment, during which time the behaviour and actions of the children and teacher were observed and then the information was recorded on the schedule. The main focus of the schedule was to enable instances of deviancy to be recorded during a 10 minute period within every 'lesson' observed. Within the schedule the number of pupils involved in a deviant act and the type of deviant acts, if any, that were observed were recorded. It was also thought to be important to record on the schedule whether teachers responded to the deviant act and the timing of their response, in terms of whether they had responded before or after the deviance had had an opportunity to escalate. The schedule was then used to record how the pupil(s) responded to the teacher's action and whether the level of deviance altered as a result of the teacher's response. Inter and intra observer agreements were undertaken to ensure a consistent and reliable approach to the data collection and analysis. These were all high, with the lowest agreement at 87.6%.

Findings

Number of pupils involved	Percentage of occasions
No misbehaviour	44.6
One pupil	16.5
2 - 4 pupils	19.5
5 or more pupils	19.4
Total	100.00

Table 1 Number of pupils involved in misbehaviour during lesson segments (60 teachers)

Types of Deviant Behaviour

If during the use of the observation schedule any pupil was perceived to be deviant, this was recorded. If more than one instance of misbehaviour occurred, each type of deviant act was categorised and all of them were recorded.

Types of misbehaviour	Percentages of occurrences
1. Noisy or illicit talk	32.9
2. Inappropriate movement	26.4
3. Inappropriate use of materials	10.3
4. Defiance of teacher	8.3
5. Taking something without permission	1.8
6. Physical aggression to another pupil	1.4
7. Illicit copying	0.6
8. Damage to materials/equipment	0.3
9. Insult to teacher	0.3
10. Illicit eating or drinking	0.3
11. Refusal to move	0.1

Table 2 Percentage of lesson segments in which various kinds of misbehaviour occurred.

In addition to the type of deviant act recorded, the perceived seriousness of the event observed was indicated on the schedule. This was placed into three categories 'mild', 'more serious' or 'very serious'. On 98% of the occasions where deviancy was observed, it was recorded as 'mild' and very few of them were seen to be 'serious'. Even though misbehaviour was seen to occur in more than half of the lessons observed, therefore, it was only minor misbehaviour and not likely to be the type of behaviour that would put anyone in physical danger or be unduly threatening. On no occasion was the 'very serious' category recorded.

Teacher Responses to Pupil Misbehaviour

Teachers' responses to misbehaviour	Percentage of occurrences
A1 To whole class	26
A2 To group	38
A3 To individuals	36
B1 Before escalation of misbehaviour	94
B2 After escalation of misbehaviour	6
C1 Order to cease	72
C2 Pupil named	68
C3 Reprimand	45
C4 Involve pupils in work	26
C5 Proximity (going over to pupil)	22
C6 Touch	16
C7 Facial expression	15
C8 Gesture	13
C9 Pause	7
C10 Pupil moved	5
C11 Praise/encouragement	4
C12 Humour	4
D1 Teacher response brief	78
D2 Teacher response sustained	22

Table 3 Teachers' responses to misbehaviour (percentages are based on the 605 lesson segments in which there was a response).

The amount of deviant acts observed during each two minute segment was also recorded. If they are calculated as a percentage of number of observed segments, 28% involved low deviancy, that is only one deviant act was observed. In 24% of the lesson segments, medium deviancy was observed, involving 2-4 deviant acts, and high deviancy, where 5 or more deviant acts were witnessed, occurred in under 4% of the lesson segments.

Outcome of teacher interaction	Percentage of occurrences
A1 Pupil(s) silent	90
A2 Pupil(s) accept(s) teacher's action	6
A3 Pupil(s) altercate(s) or protest(s)	4
B1 Misbehaviour ends	79
B2 Misbehaviour lessens	15
B3 Misbehaviour is sustained	5
B4 Misbehaviour increases	1
C1 Teacher calm	90
C2 Teacher agitated	8
C3 Teacher angry	2

Table 4 Outcomes of teachers' interactions, shown as a percentage of the 605 lesson segments in which reaction to misbehaviour took place.

On Task Involvement

The next quantitative schedule used was designed to provide some indication of the 'on task' involvement of each child within the class and at the same time make a judgment as to whether individual children were deviant during the time that they were being observed. Each child was observed for twenty seconds in a pre-determined order, to avoid focusing on children because they caught the observer's attention and thus distort the data.

One of the arguments that can be put forward for studying classroom management and its effectiveness or lack of effectiveness, is its perceived influence on learning. The public interest in whether classes are disruptive is in part because it is assumed that if children are misbehaving, it is unlikely that they are also working. Therefore if children are not working on their task they cannot be learning. Blatchford et al (1987) studied inner city infant schools and their findings suggested that children were inattentive rather than disruptive and in general the amount of 'on task' behaviour was very high.

To look at class management strategies in isolation would only present part of the overall picture of what was happening in a classroom, as even if a class were not particularly disruptive, it would not necessarily follow that the children were engaged in the intended tasks. However, to study 'on task' scores only, adds but a single dimension to the enquiry and does not in itself constitute a complete record. One of its limitations is that, although used in conjunction with deviancy levels, it provides an indication as to whether the children in a classroom *appear* to be involved in the work they are supposed to be doing. It does not reveal whether what they are doing is productive, worthwhile, or actually leads to learning. They could be completely 'on task', but involved in something which they had done before, or that involved repetitious behaviour that did not test their imagination or intellect. In other words, such qualitative matters as 'worthwhileness' or 'task matched to pupil abilities' are not being considered here. The information is limited in its application as it does not provide

evidence about such matters as knowledge and skill acquisition, or context. It does, however, give a surface indication of what appears to be the attentiveness to the task in hand.

Results

Although the possible range of scores that could be recorded would be from 0-100% for both deviancy levels and 'on task' involvement, the range obtained is in practice often much more restricted. 239 lessons were observed in total and a corresponding number of 'on task' and deviancy scores were collected. The highest involvement combination score that could be obtained would be an 'on task' level of 100% coupled with a 0% deviancy level. Conversely in the extreme case of lack of involvement in the task, the lowest possible score would be 0% 'on task' and 100% deviancy, though this is an even more unlikely occurrence. The lowest level recorded for a single lesson was 28% 'on task' and an accompanying deviancy level of 26%. The lowest scores recorded for a teacher's overall lesson average across four lessons were for the same teacher, with an overall average of 38% 'on task' and a 19.5% deviancy level. The average levels for the total sample of 60 teachers was 71% 'on task' and 5% deviancy. The range of these scores is reported in table 5 below.

	Involvement score	Deviancy score
Average of whole group	71	5
Lowest average for individual teacher (four lessons)	38	0
Lowest score for individual lesson	28	0
Highest average for individual teacher (four lessons)	92	20
Highest score for individual lesson	100	26

Table 5 Range of involvement and deviancy scores obtained for total sample.

There remains the question of the relationship between 'on task' behaviour and deviancy. In order to elicit this, a product moment correlation was calculated between all the 'on task' and deviancy scores. It produced a highly significant value of $r = -0.56^{***}$. An inverse correlation is to be expected, as more 'on task' behaviour ought to mean less deviancy, as indeed it does in this study, since the inverse correlation of -0.56 is high both in value and statistical significance.

TEACHER DATA

Each teacher in the sample was shown three photographed classroom scenarios and was asked to comment on what they would do in each of the three different circumstances.

Photograph 1

The first photograph showed two tables in a classroom. One table had three children seated at it, all working on their tasks. The other showed four children: one boy was hitting the boy

seated next to him and the other two children were sat watching. The teacher was read the following description of the event:

"You're sitting with your back to this group when you hear a noise. You turn round and see two children messing about. You have told them off once that day for not getting on with their work. What, if anything, do you do?"

Analysis of the responses showed the following categories, listed in descending order of frequency:

1. Separate the two children.
2. Find out what has happened (many of these also included movement, either by the teacher or the teacher calling the pupils over).
3. It would depend (on the children/their expectations/children's response/school sanctions).
4. Look at the task the children are supposed to be doing and reassess it, check it or discuss it.
5. Tell them off/comment on their behaviour.
6. See it as time-wasting and so get them back to work.
7. Punish (this usually meant keeping the children in if they had not finished the work or because they had already been told off).
8. Threaten punishment or warn the children.

Photograph 2

The second photograph showed a class of children entering the classroom in a boisterous manner. The teacher was read the following storyline:

"This class has just been out for break. They come running back into the room, pushing each other, squealing and laughing. What, if anything, do you do?"

The responses can be grouped as follows in descending order of frequency:

1. Send them outside and make them come in again.
2. Stop them as they come in.
3. Talk about their behaviour, (which included pointing out the dangers of rushing into the room).
4. Seat the children.
5. It depends on the circumstances.
6. Tell them off/pass comment on their behaviour.

Photograph 3

The final photograph the teachers were asked to consider, showed a teacher facing a slightly belligerent looking girl, with a boy on a nearby table sitting with a bemused expression on his face. The following comments accompanied the picture.

"You have caught this girl scribbling on someone else's book. You have told her off in front of the class and you hear her mutter 'old cow' under her breath. The children nearby snigger. What, if anything, do you do?"

The answers below show how the responses were categorised, in order of frequency.

1. Speak to her on her own, now or later, to discuss her behaviour.
2. Show emotion - anger, sarcasm, upset, humour.
3. It would depend on the child.
4. Send her to the head teacher.
5. Involve the whole class in some way.
6. Punish the girl.
7. Ask her to repeat it.
8. Tell her off.
9. Ignore the behaviour.

(N.B. Due to the sample size of teachers in the study (n=60), the responses are not listed in percentages, but they are, however, listed in rank order.)

PUPIL DATA

Methodology

Each pupil was shown the same three photographed scenarios as the ones shown to the teachers in interview. In addition to this they were also asked questions aimed at eliciting their views on classroom management and the behaviour of pupils in the classroom. These were designed to provide a greater insight into the responses of pupils on a number of poignant issues related to class management. It also enabled a child's perspective to be ascertained of what constituted effective teaching and inappropriate behaviour by themselves and their peers. It would be difficult to achieve such an insight with children of primary age without asking them specific, focused questions and this was achieved through a semi-structured interview schedule. An oral rather than written approach was also preferred, given that the younger pupils would not be able to write their responses. These responses were tape recorded and then transcribed and analysed later.

PERCEPTIONS OF PHOTOGRAPHED CLASSROOM SCENARIOS

Photograph 1

'The teacher is sitting with her back to this group when she hears a noise, she turns round and sees these two children (interviewer points to the two offenders) messing

about. She has already told them off once that day for not getting on with their work. What do you think happens next?'

Predicted outcome	Percentage of Pupils
1 Teacher will tell them off	30 4
2 They will be sent to the head	25 3
3 They will be sent outside	7 9
4 They will be sent elsewhere	7 4
5 They carry on messing about	6 7
6 They get into trouble	6 7
7 The teacher will split them up	6 3
8 They will fight	4 4
9 They will get on with their work	4 2
10 They will be kept in after school	4 0

Table 6 Responses given by pupils to photograph 1

Photograph 2

'These children have just been out to play. The teacher is sitting in the classroom (interviewer points to teacher) and the children come back into the room running, pushing each other, squealing and laughing. What do you think happens next?'

Predicted outcome	Percentage of Pupils
1 Teacher will tell them off	29 5
2 Teacher will shout at them	17 7
3 Teacher tells them to sit down	12 6
4 Teacher makes them come in again	11 9
5 Teacher tells them to be quiet	10 9
6 Children will fall over	9 8
7 Someone will get hurt	9 1
8 Children get on with their work	7 9
9 Children will sit down	2 8
10 Teacher will tell children to stop	2 3

Table 7 Responses given by pupils to photograph 2

Photograph 3

'The teacher has caught this girl scribbling on someone else's book. When the teacher tells her off in front of the class the girl mutters something rude about the teacher under

her breath. The children nearby hear what she says and giggle. What do you think happens next?'

Predicted outcome	Percentage of Pupils
1 Teacher will tell off girl and/or other pupil(s)	37.7
2 Girl will be sent to the head	17.2
3 Teacher asks pupil(s) why they are laughing	9.5
4 Pupils tell teacher what girl said	9.5
5 Girl will get into trouble	6.7
6 Girl will be sent into corner	5.3
7 Girl will be sent out of room	4.0
8 Teacher will shout/show anger	4.0
9 Teacher will speak to girl/others	3.7
10 Teacher will give reasons why behaviour was wrong	3.5

Table 8 Responses given by pupils to photograph 3

COMPARISON BETWEEN TEACHER AND PUPIL RESPONSES

The three photographs used in the pupils' interviews were exactly the same as those shown to the sixty teachers in the sample observed and interviewed. However, there was a small difference in wording, for example substituting 'something rude' for 'old cow' in photograph 3. Also teachers were asked, after the preamble, "What, if anything, do you do?", whereas pupils were asked, "What do you think happens next?" This means that comparisons between teacher and child responses must be made with caution. Given the difference in wording, it is more likely that children will speculate about, for example, whether the misbehaviour will cease, continue or escalate. Nonetheless, with the necessary caution in mind, it is worth scrutinising the two sets of responses and noting some comparisons.

	Most common teacher responses	Most common pupil responses
Photograph 1		
	1 Separate pupils	1 Tell off the two boys
	2 Find out what happened	2 Send two boys to head
Photograph 2		
	1 Send outside/re-entry	1 Tell pupils off
	2 Stop pupils coming in	2 Shout at pupils
Photograph 3		
	1 Speak to her alone	1 Tell off girl and others
	2 Show emotion (e.g. anger, upset)	2 Send girl to head

The two most common responses above of the two groups to each picture show some interesting differences. Shouting, telling off and involving superordinates like the head, or their parents, were the most frequent pupil expectations. By contrast no teacher said that she

would 'shout', telling off was in a lower ordinal position, and involvement of the head was rarely mentioned, except in the case of the verbal insult to the teacher in photograph 3, when it was the fourth most frequent response.

Sometimes there were considerable differences between pupil and teacher perceptions. In the case of photograph 2, when children rush into the classroom, the most favoured response from teachers was that they would make the children go outside again and re-enter. Whereas 77% of the teachers interviewed said that they would make the class go back out and come in again, only 12% of pupils thought this was likely to happen. Even more noteworthy is that this figure of 12 per cent (31 pupils) was inflated by one particular class, in which 19 of the 26 pupils' responses fell into this 'repeat entry' category. This reflected their class teacher's belief in the preventative function of a repeated action, as she showed in her interview response:

Teacher 047: "...*get them to do it* (enter the classroom) *again quietly. I feel that you can do that preventively.*"

It is perhaps not too surprising that there are marked differences between what teachers say they would do and how pupils expect them to behave. It is a good example of the multiple perceptions of reality, which investigators encounter when cross-checking events and beliefs. This study shows that teachers appear to believe they will react to pupil deviancy in a calm, measured, rational manner, hence the high frequency of phrases in interview like 'find out', 'talk to girl alone', 'make pupils re-enter', 'separate those misbehaving'. Only in photograph 3, when verbally abused, did emotions like anger receive a mention, and only in this case did teachers feel the need to call in superordinate authority.

Pupils, however, feel that being told off and shouted at is what miscreants can expect, and that recourse to higher authority is likely for verbal abuse of the teacher and persistently aggressive behaviour towards another pupil. In some respects their account of classroom responses to deviancy is quite close to what was actually observed, since 'order to cease', 'pupil named' and 'reprimand' are what the pupils would call a 'telling off', sometimes involving a raised voice. On the other hand the classroom observation data also revealed that teachers were judged to be 'calm' in 90% of the lesson segments analysed, rather than 'agitated' (8%) or 'angry' (2%), so both groups show some degree of concurrence with the live observations in this study.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

What is it that pupils do that is regarded as 'deviant' or 'disruptive' by teachers?

The large amount of noisy or illicit talk in classrooms was clearly a source of disruption for many teachers. There were numerous instances of the noise levels in classrooms being generally high, and this made explanations by the teacher difficult or affected the concentration of some pupils. Teachers were often involved in trying to quieten children, so that pupils' opportunity to learn in the classroom would not be affected.

The other issue that appeared to affect teachers was inappropriate movement by children. Pupils who left their seats for purposes other than those related to the task they were working on, usually appeared to do so as a means of avoiding work. They often went to other tables to talk to fellow pupils, thereby also distracting them from their work, or started doing something that they were not supposed to, such as looking out of the window, playing with an

object or wandering about aimlessly. Teachers who noticed children engaged in any of these acts often made the assumption that the pupils were involved in a work avoidance strategy, and so attempted to make them return to what they were supposed to be doing.

From this research it would be difficult to assess with any degree of exactitude which types of misbehaviour teachers deemed to be most deviant, as they were not provided with rating scales or asked which types of deviance they would be most likely to respond to. However, there are two sources of evidence which further provide insight into deviant behaviour, one from the teacher interviews, the other from the pupils. The photographs used in the teacher interviews demonstrate that all three situations were unacceptable to most teachers. The first photographic scenario was the most common to have been observed during the classroom observations, as children were frequently reprimanded for 'messing about' in some way. In response to each of the three photographs the teachers appeared to perceive all of the events as deviant, as it was rare that teachers commented that they were not concerned at the behaviours exhibited.

The fact that teachers responded so frequently to classroom events suggests that there were many behaviours displayed by children that teachers saw as deviant which ranged from breaking classroom rules, defying the teacher, using materials in an inappropriate manner, to fighting with other children. Frequency alone does not determine which acts are seen as most deviant. Indeed, the instances of deviancy regarded by teacher or observer as 'serious', were often amongst the more rare occurrences.

The pupil interviews showed that they were very aware that acts of physical or verbal aggression were unacceptable, and the low incidence of this during the classroom observations may be because teachers acted more severely when this occurred, or had instilled very strongly into the children, particularly young pupils, that this type of behaviour would not be tolerated. One other source of evidence is the involvement of superordinate authority, such as the headteacher. It was verbal abuse of the teacher that both pupils and teachers saw as most likely to involve higher authority.

How do teachers respond to such behaviour?

There is a degree of overlap between the answer to this question and the previous one, in that to a certain extent the response of teachers was the means by which it could be determined what behaviour they found to be deviant. How they responded to these behaviours is, however, slightly different. The information for this can be taken from most of the sources of data collection that were employed during this research. The lesson observations showed frequency and types of response that teachers were actually observed utilising. The photographs provided information on how teachers thought they responded to deviance when presented with specific classroom events, and the pupil interviews revealed how pupils thought teachers responded both to the same events and to events that the pupils had chosen to highlight.

Teachers were observed most frequently using reprimands and telling pupils to cease what they were doing, what Kounin (1970) called a 'desist', directing their responses specifically to those who were involved in the misbehaviour, rather than to the whole class in general, and commonly naming the specific pupil concerned. They were also likely to try and re-involve pupils in their work, or move towards pupils with this intention, or to indicate to the child that

they knew what s/he was doing. Teachers did not frequently move children to another seat, nor were they prone to encouraging them or praising them specifically. The critical events which tended to illustrate more sustained responses by teachers to misbehaviour, highlighted similar trends, but also showed occasional examples of unfairness, where earlier instructions to the pupil were countermanded, or some other inconsistency occurred.

Pupils showed a similar pattern amongst their responses in how they thought teachers dealt with misbehaviour when responding to the photographs. In response to each of the three scenarios the most popular strategy pupils thought that the teacher would use was to 'tell the pupils off'. This could suggest that children did not differentiate in the severity of the behaviour by pupils, but rather felt that teachers consistently applied this type of response to many different types of misbehaviour. Teachers, however, did not frequently offer 'telling off' as a likely strategy in their responses, appearing to offer much more context specific responses which varied according to the type of misbehaviour in the photograph. There was much greater congruence when pupils were asked about deviance in the semi-structured interview schedule. Although 'telling off' was still a common reply when pupils had been naughty, other teacher responses were also likely, and pupils believed that teachers were capable of moving them or sending them to the headteacher.

The difference may lie in the perceived severity of events. When children, especially younger ones, are given general situations in which they are not involved, they may find it easier to respond with a description of the manner in which they have observed teachers behaving frequently in the classroom. However, when they are asked for specific examples of what they see as 'naughty' they are more likely to base their responses on actual personal memories of particular events which were perceived as particularly 'naughty'. This may account for the range of answers given by pupils. Teachers by contrast are perhaps responding with a paragon ideal, assuming that there are no constraints of time, space or personal energy. The reality may lie somewhere in between the two.

This does not detract from the overall congruence in the types of strategies that teachers claimed they used and what the researcher had witnessed in their classroom, confirming the wisdom of the decision both to observe and interview. It was rare that a strategy was offered that had never been observed, and there was a large degree of consensus in many of the responses given.

Yet on some occasions it was the pupils' responses that accorded more closely to what the observer had seen. For example, the response to photograph 2 that was offered by the majority of teachers was that, if children entered the room in such an unacceptable manner, then teachers would send them out and ask them to come in again. Pupils, however, thought that a 'telling off' was more likely. Research by Wragg (1993b) that focused on first encounters showed that by the third day of the school year, many classes of pupils were already starting to enter the classroom before the teacher arrived. In addition to this, in many of the schools visited in the present research, teachers did not accompany children in from the playground when the bell went. A possible explanation again lies in the difference between idealism and reality. If teachers are not in their classrooms to observe the entry of pupils then the possibility of this type of strategy being observed would be rare, so the answers given by teachers may be based on ideals or infrequent occurrences, and those by children based on general experiences of teacher behaviour, or occasional specific occurrences.

What is the outcome of the teachers' responses?

If teachers' responses had been incorrectly or inappropriately applied, a possible outcome might have been that children would be likely to react in some way, because they would feel unfairly treated. However, the structured classroom observations indicated that teachers overwhelmingly directed their responses to those children who had been involved in the misbehaviour. It would not necessarily follow from this that pupils would accept the teacher's reprimands or actions, but in the majority of cases they did so, and it was rare that pupils would argue or debate the issue. Usually they complied.

Even though the children appeared to accept passively the teacher's reaction, the question can be asked whether the response by teachers served its purpose and actually ended the deviance. Again the teacher's actions did appear to terminate the behaviour in the majority of cases, and this was substantiated by both the findings of the quantitative and the qualitative observations. In 94% of cases teachers responded before the escalation of deviance, and also in 94% of instances the deviance lessened or ceased altogether, after a short teacher response on 78% of occasions. The issue that is not resolved, however, is whether the teacher's action has any longer term effect. The fact that children continue to misbehave would suggest that many strategies only appeared to work in the short term, and there were numerous examples of a repeated cycle of noise - reprimand - quiet - noise - reprimand - quiet.

Are there differences in these events between classes of younger or older pupils?

An analysis that enabled these types of differences to be examined was not undertaken on all aspects of the data. However, the nature of the quantitative data allowed tentative conclusions to be drawn on the differences in the frequencies of events and responses collected through the use of the class management schedule. The most significant results appeared in the differences between children of different ages. It might have been predicted, without research evidence, that the greatest amount of deviance would occur in the classes of younger children who had not yet been socialised into the rules framework set up in most schools, or indeed in the classes of older children who are becoming more autonomous, developing their own minds and therefore more likely to become involved in a power struggle with teachers. The evidence in this research clearly suggests that children in the middle age range of 7-9 year olds are more likely to be involved in classroom misbehaviour.

How do teachers and pupils perceive classroom events involving 'deviancy'?

Some responses to this question have already been discussed above, and there were both similarities and differences between teachers' and pupils' interpretations and meanings attached to classroom events. One of the most striking issues is that of 'shouting'. Almost all pupils described shouting as a common response from teachers when deviancy occurred, yet teachers did not use the word 'shout' nor any term like it. Teachers' perceptions of their responses were much more that it would be measured and reasoned, rather than harsh and emotional.

The observation data give support to both these apparently disparate viewpoints. Teachers were deemed to be 'calm' in 90% of lesson segments, endorsing the 'rational' notion put forward by teachers. They were also regarded as 'agitated' or 'angry', however, on 10% of occasions, and were often heard by the observer to raise their voice, which endorses the picture presented by pupils. This is a good example of the use of triangulation to help clarify

the different perceptions of reality. It appears that teachers do indeed shout at pupils, though they are reluctant to describe it in those terms, but that it occurs on a minority of occasions. When it does happen, however, it seems to make a negative impression on pupils.

MICRO PARADIGMS OF TEACHING

At a more specific level, it often emerged from the observations of lessons and the pupil interviews in particular, that certain kinds of event occur frequently. Analysis of these allows the researcher (Wragg 1994) to construct the following eight micro-paradigms, which although not exhaustive, encapsulate some of these recurring patterns.

1. The boredom loop

Task does not engage ---> social chat ---> teacher 'desist' ---> quiet

This occurred very frequently during the research. Children became bored as the task did not engage their interest, so they left their seats or talked to others nearby. This often led to a reprimand and an order to cease, followed by quiet. The process then began again shortly afterwards.

2. Attention seeking

Child 'stuck' ---> leaves seat to ask teacher ---> reprimanded ---> returns ---> talks ---> teacher comes over

This was another frequent occurrence when pupils sought attention from a busy teacher and were reprimanded for illicit movement. Eventually the teacher would come over to them, but they often distracted others in the interim.

3. Prevention

Pupil distracted ---> teacher notices ---> proximity (often with touch, especially younger pupils) ---> re-involvement in work

Another sequence that was often noticed was when teachers anticipated problems and went across to pupils to re-engage them in the task. With infant age pupils this often involved the use of touch as well, usually to guide children back to their seat or the task.

4. Power-coercion

Teacher expects ---> pupil declines ---> teacher re-asserts ---> pupil defiance ---> coercion

The use of power to ensure that certain behaviour takes place occurred when pupils challenged the teacher's authority, for pupil defiance was the fourth most frequently noted reply to the teacher's response to misbehaviour. In the end the teacher simply ordered compliance, which usually, though not always, ensued.

5. Stereotyping

Pupils disrupt ---> teacher raises voice ---> pupil named ---> public shaming

When several pupils were misbehaving, typification sometimes took place. This involved one pupil, sometimes two, being named as illustrative of the stereotype of 'naughty' pupil. The pupil concerned was mostly given a minor public shaming.

6. Democratic

Pupil(s) disrupt --- > teacher reprimands ---> teacher and pupils discuss issue and remedies

Some teachers wished to escape the pressure to take immediate and expedient action, and actually engaged the pupils in discourse about the nature of the misbehaviour and how pupils might conduct themselves in future.

7. Confrontation

More serious misbehaviour ---> teacher raises voice, shows anger ---> pupil altercates ---> teacher administers punishment

Confrontations were not frequently observed, but they usually made an impact when they occurred. Pupil altercation was relatively infrequent, only 4% of the responses being placed in this category, but the frequency was 12% in the South-east.

8. Displacement

Pupil disrupts ---> teacher reprimands ---> teacher sees pupil privately

This strategy was sometimes used by teachers as an alternative to confrontation, and was an answer given by some in response to photograph 3, where the pupil called the teacher 'old cow'. Most believed that pupils should know that the misdemeanour was being dealt with, but deflected aggression by seeing pupils later, or in a quiet place away from peers.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Although teachers face class management issues every day, they do not always reflect on the many different strategies they use, the frequency with which they use them, or the effectiveness of them on the individual concerned or the class as a whole. Teaching has been shown by many researchers to be a very busy occupation with hundreds of interactions in a single day, so it is very difficult for practitioners to step back from their teaching long enough to be able to gauge the consequences of their actions. Training offers an insight into areas they might otherwise not have explored or considered, and training based on research evidence can provide concrete examples of strategies and their outcomes, like the micro paradigms above, and show how teachers perceive their pupils and how pupils perceive their teachers.

The findings of the current research illustrate that there is a lack of congruence between the pupils' perception of events and that of the teachers. As Burden (1991) has pointed out, pupils

are an important source of information, but teachers either do not recognise this, or do not perceive their views to be an important consideration. This present research has shown that pupils are able to conceptualise their thoughts, and are willing to provide ideas on seemingly contentious subjects, such as deviance, in a structured and non-anarchic way. Although within some classrooms the means of teacher-pupil interactions, such as the medium of 'circle time', is used to discuss pupils' behaviour and why what has occurred is socially unacceptable, there is no opportunity within this forum to discuss the teacher's behaviour and the way that pupils perceive this. An obvious constraint to teachers eliciting the views of their pupils is the time that it inevitably takes, though a number of teachers do use devices like 'circle time' to scrutinise and reflect on process.

Glasser (1969) introduced the notion of 'reality therapy', whereby teachers discuss the behaviour of pupils with a child with whom they already have a strong relationship, to ascertain what may be going wrong. However like 'circle time' this tends to focus on the pupils' behaviour rather than that of the teacher. A further barrier may be the concern by pupils that they could not talk as honestly to their own class teacher as they did to a researcher, for fear of retribution. This could be overcome if teachers were to use a semi-projective means of questioning, such as was done with the photographs in this research. This may highlight to teachers some of the findings illustrated during this study: that children are concerned about issues such as 'fairness', and that they do not like teachers who shout. It may also demonstrate that a particular strategy that they frequently employ does not work because of the way it is perceived by their pupils.

Some teachers may be reluctant to adopt a scheme which they may feel will serve to undermine their own authority in the classroom. However, the work of Freiberg et al (1994) investigated the introduction of what they termed 'consistency management' in 'at risk' inner-city schools in Texas. Teachers encouraged pupils to apply for minor classroom managerial jobs, such as clearing away resources, for which they were subsequently allocated responsibility within the school. Pupils were thereby encouraged to share in the 'discipline' of the classroom and it was no longer seen as something that was 'done' to children but as a joint responsibility. The research showed that the number of exclusions and referrals went down, whilst the test scores went up. What this type of research serves to demonstrate is that teachers do not necessarily have to fear loss of control by introducing pupils' views into the arena of discipline.

There are constraints to eliciting pupils' views on discipline, not least of which may be the teacher's own attitude to the idea. However, pupils offer an insight into classroom life that should not be ignored if teachers are to understand better the minor acts of deviancy that can occupy so much of their teaching time, as well as diminish some of the anxieties about control that teachers may feel.

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